

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to golf clubs and more specifically to golf clubs employing a uniquely configured multi-use, multi-lie golf club head.

BACKGROUND ART

The typical set of golf clubs used by the average golfer to play a round of golf includes both irons and woods and a putter totaling fourteen clubs, which is the allowed maximum. The irons usually consist of irons numbered three through nine plus at least a pitching wedge and a sand wedge. The woods usually consist of a driver and one or two fairway woods such as a number three and a number five wood. This leaves the golfer with a choice of one or two additional clubs which could fill a gap in needed shot distance, loft and lie. For example, some golfers may carry a higher loft wedge for close in shots near the greens where even a sand wedge may be difficult to control. Other golfers may prefer to carry a "utility" or a "trouble" club, that is, a club designed for use in deep rough or heavy growth. Still other golfers carry an especially long iron such as a number two iron or an especially short wood such as a number seven or number nine wood. The concept of carrying such a club is to fill the performance gaps of a standard set of irons and woods so that a suitable club is available for virtually any shot no matter how challenging.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

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Sub A> The present invention comprises a utility golf club that combines a number of features not otherwise found in any one standard golf club. The preferred embodiment of the present invention comprises a golf club having a short shaft, a heavy head, a strong loft angle, a deep face, a wide sole, a sharp edge sole pattern, an increase lie angle and hitting surface and sightline alignment aids. These features combine to provide a very useful extra club that can be advantageously employed in a variety of difficult game situations. The short shaft aids precision and increases attack angle. The heavy head helps defeat deep rough and permits a shortened back swing. The deep face or hitting surface, assures a greater probability of striking the ball even in the rough where the ball may sit very high. A stronger loft angle is useful for bump and run shots near the greens as well as extricating shots out of the rough. The sharp edge sole pattern permits more consistent shots on hard surfaces. The alignment aids permit accurate orientation of the club head particularly near the green where it can be controlled like a putter. In addition, the preferred embodiment of the invention utilizes a high lie angle and a hosel shifted behind the club head's leading edge to reduce turf contact particularly in the rough and thus minimize induced twisting.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The aforementioned objects and advantages of the present invention, as well as additional objects and advantages thereof, will be more fully understood hereinafter as a result of a detailed description of a preferred embodiment when taken in conjunction with the following drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a front view of the preferred embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 2 is a bottom plan view of the preferred embodiment;

FIG. 3 is a top plan of the preferred embodiment;

FIG. 4 is a rear view;

FIG. 5 is a toe end view;

FIG. 6 is a heel end view; and

FIG. 7 is a rear perspective view.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring to the accompanying drawings, it will be seen that in a preferred embodiment shown in FIGs. 1-7, a golf club head 10 comprises a hitting surface or face 12 framed by a toe 14, a top line 16, a sole 18 and a heel 20. The head 10 includes a hosel 22 for connection to a shaft (not shown).

Face 12 is characterized by a unique score line pattern comprising horizontal score lines 24 and a punch mark pattern 26 forming a vertically oriented visual alignment aid.

Sole 18 is characterized by a unique groove pattern 28 which is a trapezoidal configuration. In the illustrated embodiment pattern 28 (seen best in FIG. 2) has a heelward groove that is shorter than the toeward groove. The grooves terminate close to the junction of the sole 18 and the face 12 thereby forming teeth-like sharp edges which are helpful on hardpan surfaces. The sharp edges dig into the hardpan and thereby delay ricochet action of the head to get the leading edge of the head under the ball to avoid a "thin" shot.

The rear of the head 10 comprises a rear cavity 19, a medallion area 21 and a ledge 32 extending rearwardly of the face 12. A recess 30 is formed in the ledge 32. Recess 30 provides a directional sightline alignment aid when addressing the ball with head 10.

Various features of the inventive golf club that render it especially useful as a utility club, include the following:

1 The loft of the head 10 is preferably stronger (i.e., less than) 30°. The strong loft
2 angle keeps shots down among trees and under branches, enables bump and run
3 shots around the greens and permits advantageous tee shots particularly in tight or
4 narrow fairways where accuracy is more important than distance.

5
6 The mass of head 10 is preferably greater than 320 grams to generate high ball speed
7 even with slower swing speed and to promote straight shots even through rough.

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9 The depth of the face 12, that is, the distance along the face between the sole 18 and
10 the top line 16, is preferably 1.75 inches or more. Such a deep face enlarges the sweet
11 spot which reduces the negative effects of a mishit and it improves the likelihood of
12 good ball contact in the rough. The sole 18 preferably has a width, that is, a distance
13 from face 12 to the back of head ledge 32, of at least 1.2 inches. This wider sole
14 prevents unwanted digging particularly in difficult lies while still permitting good ball
15 contact even in the rough.

16
17 The overall length of the club is comparable to that of a standard sand wedge. The
18 inventive club employs a shaft which is preferably less than 37 inches in length. This
19 feature permits close ball proximity and increased attack angle into the ball which
20 promotes accuracy even in the rough.

21
22 The position of the hosel 22 relative to the hitting surface 12 is also unique in the
23 present invention. The hosel is oriented to provide an increased or more upright lie
24 angle to promote a more upright swing to minimize turf contact. The hosel 22 is also
25 closer to the center of gravity of the head 10 to reduce contact with grass just prior to
26 contact with the ball. Moreover, the hosel is positioned further behind the leading edge
27 of the head 10 to more uniformly distribute the turf load and thus prevent twisting
28 particularly in the rough.

1 Having thus disclosed a preferred embodiment of the invention, it being understood
2 that numerous variations are contemplated as being within the inventive principles
3 described herein, and that the scope of the invention is limited only by the appended
4 claims and their equivalents; what is claimed is:

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